Prepare Your Family

Although no one can prevent natural disasters from occurring, there are many things you can do to make the impact less devastating for your family.

Every home should have 3 key elements in place before a disaster strikes:

- Evacuation Plan
- Communication Plan
- Emergency Supply Kit

EVACUATION PLAN

In the event of an emergency such as a flood, wildfire, tornado or hurricane, you may be instructed to evacuate your house. Depending on the type of natural disaster, you may have to travel 20 to 50 miles to get your family to safety. Establish a "safety destination" (like a friend's or relative's house some distance away) and plan several different routes to get there so you can drive around roadblocks or hazards. Practice your plan and become familiar with each route so you will be better prepared.

You may need to turn off your gas, water and electricity before you evacuate. Each member of the household should learn when and how to do this.

COMMUNICATION PLAN

During an emergency it is usually easier to make long distance calls, so choose an out-of-state relative to be your family's "communication center." Be sure that each member of your family knows the name and phone number for this person in case you are separated. By having everyone call one central person, it will be easier for you to check on each other and reunite after a disaster.

Teach every family member when and how to dial 9-1-1 for emergency assistance.

KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS

Find out if any of your neighbors will need extra help during an emergency. The elderly, disabled and people with small children may need you to lend a helping hand.



Emergency Kits

EMERGENCY SUPPLY KIT

Whether you are preparing for an earthquake, tornado, hurricane, flood or wildfire, you will need the following basic items in your kit:

- battery-operated radio and extra batteries
- one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- flashlight and extra batteries
- · canned food
- first aid kit and manual
- prescription medications you take every day such as insulin, heart medicine and asthma inhalers
- non-prescription medications (aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever) and dust masks
- large garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- local maps
- infant formula and diapers
- portable container for important family documents

- cash or traveler's checks and change
- · fire extinguisher
- matches in a waterproof container
- paper and pencil
- books, games, puzzles or other activities for children
- battery-operated lantern and extra batteries
- blankets
- hand-operated can opener
- durable shoes and change of clothes for each member of your family
- basic tools (wrench, hammer)
- utility gloves

Place all items in a sturdy, closed container outside your home where it can be easily located. Restock food and water twice a year.

For detailed information on an emergency preparedness kit, please visit the Homeland Security website at www.ready.gov.

PET SUPPLY KIT

An emergency kit for your furry friends should include:

- food
- water
- bowl
- medication and medical records
- first aid kit (talk to your veterinarian about what is most appropriate for your pet's emergency medical needs)
- collar with ID tag, harness or leash
- · crate or other pet carrier
- sanitation (pet litter and litter box, newspapers, plastic trash bags)
- a picture of you and your pet together
- favorite toys, treats or bedding
- blanket
- name and phone number of your veterinarian

Place all items in a sturdy, closed container outside your home where it can be easily located. Restock food and water twice a year.